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Beauties of the Boyne, and its Tributary, the Blackwater,' and for the admirable memoir of the 'History and Antiquities of Tara Hill,' by our venerable friend, Dr. Petrie, published in the 'Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy;' together with the writings of the Rev. Richard Butler, Dean of Clonmacnoise, referring to Trim and its ancient remains,—little would be known to the public at large, regarding the many objects of deep antiquarian interest in the county of Meath. There are various topographical features of our Irish counties, neither described by the tourist, nor sketched by the artist; and yet they are illustrative of ancient manners, customs, and economy. An hundred years hence they will have disappeared from the face of the country, and not a single memorial of them will remain. A mere trifle, in the shape of a Government grant, would enable the Ordnance Department in Ireland to employ artists to preserve their outlines, for the enlightenment of succeeding generations. Would it be too much to demand, in return, for the millions sent by Ireland, to the Imperial Exchequer?"

The following papers were then submitted to the Meeting.

GLEANINGS IN NORTHERN CHURCH-YARDS.

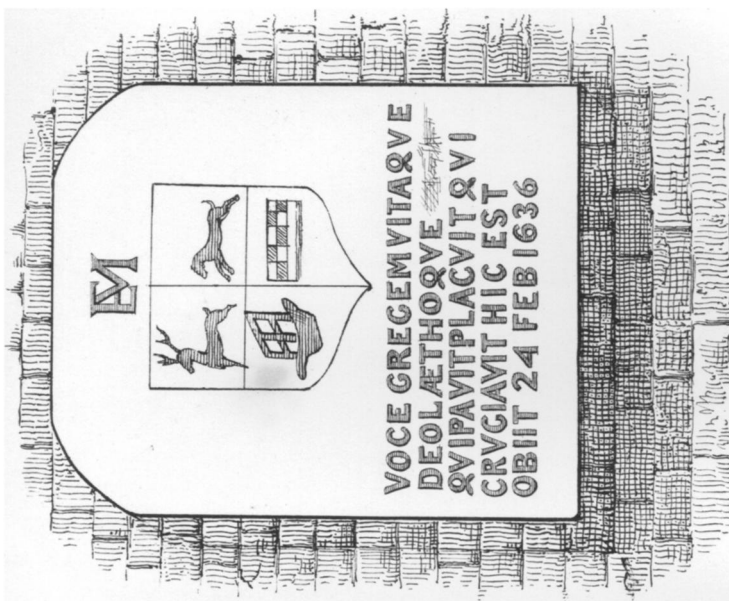
BY THE REV. GEORGE H. READE.

DURING the summer of 1857, while residing for a short time near Bushmills, in the county of Antrim, my attention was drawn to several dilapidated churches, of a very simple and unpretending form of architecture, situate in various parts of the north-east of that county. Indeed, according to Mr. James Ferguson's definition of "architecture," they have no claim to that honourable name whatever, if, as he says, "Architecture is the art of ornamental and ornamented construction," as they are all plain, barn-like constructions, of the most simple and unpretending form, and wholly devoid of any ornament, the door placed in the west end, and in some cases a very small offset, like a diminutive chancel, in the east end. They would seem to be magnified copies of the small, old churches of the seventh century, of which so perfect a specimen still exists in the town of Clones. These churches were originally built by the first settlers of Ulster, in the reign of James I.; yet, though possessing nothing attractive, even in the eye of the antiquary, beyond their roofless walls and dilapidated windows, and in all cases superseded by buildings of much greater architectural pretensions, still they struck me as having an interest peculiarly their own, such as attaches to the humble, dark-coloured "editio princeps" of a volume, which may have its gilt and "hot-pressed" successor adorning the library.



Nº 1

Engraved by M. W. A. Co. Boston.



Nº 2

Searching amongst the rank herbage around these ruined churches, I saw a large number of flat tombstones with the letters raised, not incised; and observing here and there the old English form of the first letter of the alphabet, formed like a reversed V with a T-cross on the apex, which ceased to be used upon the coins towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth, I at first thought these tombstones belonged to that period. Fashion, however, did not travel in those troublous times as rapidly as in these railroad and telegraph days; so that the "Old Mortalities" of the county of Antrim continued in happy ignorance of the alteration in the form of the alphabet far into the reign of Charles I. The headstones and mural tablets, however, appear in modern letters, and all incised. I found these slabs scattered—

"Thick as leaves in Vallombrosa"—

through all the church-yards which I visited; but alas! nearly all obliterated, or so much worn away that only a few letters could be deciphered. They are nearly all of a soft, coarse-grained sandstone; and as the inscriptions were in relief, the feet of the loiterers in church-yards had committed so much the greater damage. The "coat-armour," which always formed the centre ornament of the slab, was in most cases wholly obliterated, even in many where the raised edging had preserved the inscription. Upon all the slabs, the legend, commencing at the top, runs round the tombstone, and when it reaches the top again, falls in as a second line, and thence continues across the slab, and not round the edges. Nearly all the names inscribed are no longer found in the roll of fame as landholders or "HONORABLE MEN" in the county, except that of our worthy Associate, Sir Edward W. Mac Naghten, to whose liberality the Society is indebted for the illustrations which accompany this paper. There is also a monument in Derrykeighan church to A: FAITHFUL: SISTER: IN: THE: LORD: SVMTYM: WYFE: TO: WILLIAM: HVTCHE-SON: OF: STRANOCVM; but though there is a gentleman of that name possessor of Stranocum, he disclaims this "faithful sister in the Lord:" she must, therefore, remain unsung or unillustrated—"quia caret sacro vate."

No. 2 in the Plate facing this page is a mural tablet on the west end of Derrykeighan church: the inscription cost much time and labour to decipher—it probably commemorates the virtues of some clergyman of that church, then newly erected. There is no mention of his name; perhaps some member skilled in the mysteries of "Gwillelm" may be enabled to recover it from the initials EM, together with the fearless stag and anxious hound. Our very learned Associate, Evelyn Philip Shirley, Esq., of Lough Fea, tells me the arms are those of M'Kenna, probably the same as the M'Kinnons of Skye, referred

to in Dr. Hume's talented paper in the "Ulster Journal of Archaeology," as relating, in 1800, his embarrassment at donning his first pair of trousers after his escape in 1745. The present rector of Derrykeighan, who is about to favour the Society with all that can be recovered of the various incumbents of the parishes in Antrim, has not hitherto discovered any predecessor of his of that name. The monument has suffered much from rude hands, although placed high in the wall: perhaps it was thought better in that very stormy period, so short a time before the outbreak of 1641, to leave the modest name of him, "*Qui hic est*" unrecorded—the word *FIDELES* appears to be that erased in this plate.

About this time many of the churches were left without any ministers whatever. During Cromwell's usurpation Puritan divines got possession of most of the parishes in the county, which they held for many years. For the following anecdote of one of these I am indebted to the Rev. Thomas Hincks, of Derrykeighan Rectory:—"At the time of the restoration of Charles II., the Rev. Thomas Hoggyard was in possession of the parish of Ballyrashane, where he officiated, it is said, with great acceptance to large congregations. On his refusal to comply with the royal mandate, either to resign or conform, a party of dragoons came one Sunday to the church to expel him. He asked and was permitted to finish his sermon, and on leaving the pulpit he closed it and struck it three times with his Bible, saying—'*I arrest this pulpit in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as King and Head of this Church, that neither Episcopalian, Erastian, nor indulged Presbyterian, shall ever enter it, or address a congregation in this church, until the top stone of the building is as low as the foundation.*'" This denunciation seems to have been literally fulfilled, as the church was soon after in ruins; and from that time until the present building was erected in 1827, there was no church, nor any resident or regularly officiating minister."

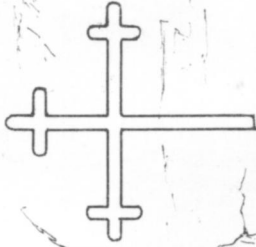
The Plate given at p. 49, Fig. I, represents a headstone in the church-yard of Derrykeighan; it bears the earliest date of any that I saw, viz., 1616, four years after the date of the Plantation: it is in excellent preservation, the letters sharply cut in a very fine-grained gray marble, which is not found in the locality—indeed, as is well known, the surface of the county of Antrim is composed of basalt and its associate minerals, overlying the chalk, which crops out at the edges of the county all round. This basalt is generally columnar, as at the Causeway, above Port Ballintrae, and many other places—doubtless all formed by the same volcanic eruption; but affording no slabs or stones fit for monumental inscriptions. Although I could not find the name of Kar amongst the people in that locality at present, it is a well known and honoured name in Scotland and the north of Ireland; it is common in the barony of Upper

HEIRE·LYETH·THE·BODIE·OF·IHNN·MYNCHTEN·FIRST·SECTARIE

FIRST·ERLE·OF·XNTRIM·WHO·DEPARTED·THIS·MORTALITIE·THE

OF·OVR·LORD·GOD

1·6·3·0·



FAR

Dunluce, where it is now spelled Kerr : in Dr. Hume's valuable map it is mentioned as thirty-seventh in order of frequency.

The Plate facing this page represents the inscription on the tomb, at Bona-Margy, of Shane Dhu Macnachtan, secretary and grand-nephew of Randal Mac Sorley Mac Donnell, first Earl of Antrim. Bona-Margy is remarkable as being the last religious house founded in Ireland. It was built in 1609 by Charles Mac Donnell, for monks of the Franciscan order : it is situated near the most northerly town of Ireland—Ballycastle or Ballycashlain, i. e. Castletown, deriving that name from a castle built there in 1609 by Randal, first Earl of Antrim, who was directed by James I. to raise “faire castels” at reasonable distances “on his vast estates, that the country might be the more speedily civilized.”

The family of the Macnachts is of the greatest antiquity of any in Scotland, and preserves its hereditary descent unbroken down to the present day, the late Sir Francis Macnaghten having been formally acknowledged as head or chief of Clan-Macnachten in 1813. Many of the Pictish monarchs were of this family ; the first we read of was Nachtan Morbet, who died A. D. 480, having reigned twenty-five years. In 685 the Northumbrian king Egfrid ravaged the Pictish territory until his career was stopped at Dun Nachtan, adjoining the lake now called Loch Inch, but long known as Nachtan Mere. In A. D. 710 we find the accession of Nachtan Mac Dereli, who is mentioned in the “Annals of Tigernach” as having expelled the monks of Iona in 717. The family is traced by the genealogists, amidst battles, and forays, and contests for their throne, to the time of Malcolm Canmore, during which period they were the real sovereigns of the North ; they sunk, however, beneath the ascendancy of the kings of that time. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries we find them receiving many royal grants of forfeited lands, amongst which was Fraoh-Elin, or the Island of Heather, which was granted by Alexander III. to Gillechrest Macnachten, Feb. 12, 1267, on condition that the castle should be kept in fit repair to receive the king. This island, which is in Loch Awe, was the traditional Hesperides of Scotland. This Gillechrest Macnachten was father of Donald Macnachten, of whom John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen, writes in quaint, but, to modern ears, most uncouth rhymes. Macnachten, although a friend of the Bruce's bitterest foe, John of Lorn, yet could appreciate heroism even in an opponent. Bruce was at the time retiring before Lorn's forces, and, riding in rere of his men, was attacked at disadvantage—three to one : he slew all his assailants unaided, whereon, says Barbour :—

“There was a Baron Macnaughtane
that in his heart great keep hath tane

unto the King his chevalry
 and praised him in heart greatly
 and to the Lord of Lorn said he
 sickerly now Sir you may see
 Betane the starkest pundelane
 that in your life time you saw tane
 for yon knight thro' his doughty deed
 and thro' his outrageous man heed
 has felled in a little tide
 three men of meekle might and pride
 and stonied all our men so
 that after him dare no man go
 and turns so many times his steed
 it seems of us he has no dread
 and sickerly in all my time
 I never heard in song or rhyme
 tell of a man that so smartly
 atcheved so great chevalry."

The Bruce (Edinburgh, 1620).

His son, Duncan Macnaghten, accompanied Lord James Douglas on the famous expedition to deposit the heart of Robert Bruce in Jerusalem, in consequence of which the family have a right to carry on their coat-armour "the bleeding heart." Sir Alexander Macnaghten, lineal descendant of Gillechrest, the hereditary constable of Fraoh-Elin, was killed on Flodden-field with King James V.; his son and heir, John, married Anne, daughter of Murdock Maclean, by his wife Anne Mac Donald, sister of the first Earl of Antrim, and daughter of the celebrated Sorley Boy.¹ The honours of this ancient family devolved upon his third son, Shane Dhu, or Black John, who came to Ireland as "Sectarie" to his grand uncle, Randal Mac Sorley Mac Donnell, the inscription on whose tomb is here given. The Mac Donnells and the Mac Mullens are the only names given on Dr. O'Connor's map of "families having possessions in Antrim in the beginning of the seventeenth century," who have representatives at present; the Mac Mullens are known to many as the hereditary "guides to the Causeway;" and from my experience of them I add, most efficient, attentive, and obliging guides they are.

The tombstone here engraved is that of Antony Kennedy, of Balsaragh, now lying in the space formerly occupied by the old church of Billey; this stone, having been buried under ground for a long time, is in a most perfect state of preservation, the letters sharp

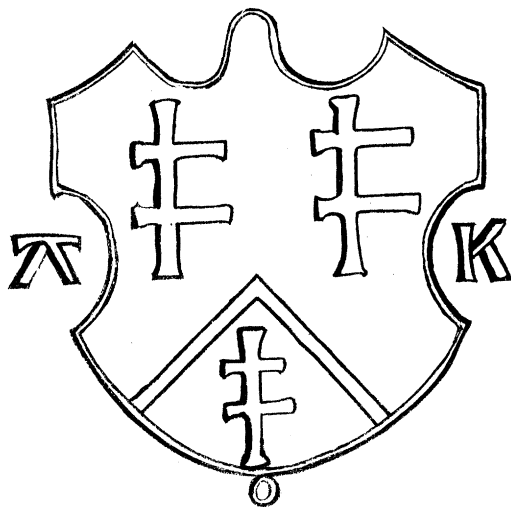
¹ The extent of Sorley Boy's dairy is quaintly stated in an extract from the State Paper Office quoted in the notes to Sir Henry Sidney's Memoir of his government in Ire-

land, printed in the "Ulster Journal of Archaeology," No. 20:—"Sorley, who *was* Lord over 50,000 cows, has now *but* 1500 to give him milk."

HEIR · LXETH · XME ·

DXX · OF · DECE
MBER · THE
XEIRE · OF GOD

1620



RTCH · WHO · DEPT · THE ·

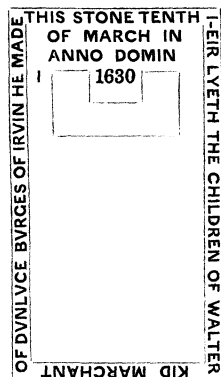
HONOR · BILE · M · N · CALLED · X ·

ME · D · X · OF · B · L · S ·

and clear as when first cut. I could not hear of any “HONORABILE MAN” of that name now in the neighbourhood. This title bears at present in that locality the meaning of talented and intellectual, as well as its usual signification. By the Ulster “Inquisitions” it appears that he held of the Crown by knight’s service, but alienated his land to the Earl of Antrim, as witnesses the following extract:—“8th. Jan. 1635—Comes Antrym seis’ fuit ut de feod’ de vil’ et ter’ de Ballyloughbeg¹ 100 acr’ Mareside 50 acr’ adjacent’ super quarter’ de Twornyrobert & 1. Molendin’ frument’ cū 5 acr’ ter’—Sic inde seis existen’ p̄d Comes p fact’ suū alienavit pmiss cuidā Anth’ Kennedy de Twornyrobert et hered’ suis imppet’ dict’ Anth’ obiit 1 Augt 1625. Walter’ Kennedy ejus fil’ et her’ tunc fuit’ etat 26 annorum et non maritat’—pmiss tenent’ de Re p s̄vic’ mil’—Ann’ Kennedy al’ Moore fuit ux’ dict’ Anth’ et in plena vita existit et dotat’ est de pmiss—le sessions Hall Carrickfergus 17. Aug’ 1636. Walter’ Kennedy de Townyrobert in C^o Antrim et Elenor’ ux’ ejus & Quintin Moore & Agnes ux’ ejus. seis’ fuer’ ut de feod’ de 1 mes’ 7 toft’ 8 gardin’ 100 acr’ ter’ arabil’ 40 acr prat’ 60 acr’ pastur’ & 100 acr’ mor’ in vil’ & ter’ de Ballyloughbeg & Cilley [quere Billey] et sic seis’ p fin’ levat’ in cur’ Regis coram justic’ &c. alienavit pmiss’ Randolph’ Comit’ Antrym hered’ et assign’ suis imppet’—pmiss’ tenent’ de Re p s̄vic’ mil’.” The name of Kennedy is set down as “nineteenth in order of frequency” in Dr. A. Hume’s Ethnological Map, in No. 20 of the “Ulster Journal of Archæology,” but is not found in the baronies of Dunluce—only in those of Lower Antrim and Lower Belfast.

This tombstone is in the church-yard of Dunluce, a little to the east of the ruined castle of that name; it is very much worn; the arms were sculptured at the foot, but are nearly obliterated. Much interest seems to belong to this monument, erected by the “Scotch burgess,” as it shows Dunluce was at that period a place of some consequence, having merchants (the mural tablet inside belonging to another merchant). Perhaps, during the absence of poor Burgess Kid, his children were killed in some of the savage assaults of the Irish about this period upon Dunluce Castle, and were buried together in this grave, over which the bereaved parent afterwards erected this simple and touching memorial.

Little mercy would be shown to the captive children of the foreign trader. His name is not now found in the county.



¹ Ballyloughbeg is in the parish of Billey.

I-ERE·VNDER·LYETH·T-E·BODY·OF·FLORENCE
 M·PHILIP·ALIAS·HAMILTON·LATE·WIFE·OF
 ARCHBALD·M^CPHILIP·OF·DVNLVCE·MERCH^T
 AND·DAUGHTER·TO·CAPTANE·ROBERT·HAMIL-
 TON·OF·CLADEY·WHO·DEPARTED·T-18·LIFE
 THE 20^H·OF·IVLY·ANNO·1674.

Death can dissolve but not destroy
 Who sows in teares shall reap in joy.

This tablet is affixed to the north wall on the inside of Dunluce old church; it is a very fine, close-grained, gray limestone, from the same quarry as the headstone of Robart Kar in Derrykeighan Church; the inscription is very clearly cut and well preserved. Above this tablet the Hamilton arms, together with hour-glasses and such like emblems, are cut in a coarse sandstone. The merchant of Dunluce probably found no difficulty in winning the hand of the captain's daughter, if she was mewed up among the solitary gables of this rock fortress; very probably the forty-four years which had passed away since Burgess Kid erected his sad memorial brought on more peaceful times, unless the last line of the couplet refers to a sorrow deeper than the natural grief of the worthy merchant for the loss of his wife.

There are very many other tombstones of the early part of the seventeenth century in the church-yards of the county of Antrim. Besides those exposed and rendered illegible, many will be found slightly covered with earth, and in as good preservation as that of Antony Kennedy. I have given here but a few of these frail memorials of men whose lot was cast in evil times, merely as specimens of what seem to me an interesting class of antiques, fast fading away. Perhaps some of our Associates in that quarter will follow out the search: mine was a very brief and hasty inspection; I visited but a few church-yards during a short sojourn for health; and I believe many monuments of much greater interest still remain to reward their endeavours. On one slab in Derrykeighan, of which I am unable to give a Plate, the coat-armour bore the exact representation of a skene-dhu, and a celt or bronze hatchet fixed in its handle. Could the "honorable man" beneath have won these insignia by the slaughter of Irish kernes armed with their national weapons? As, however, the name is MacCook, they may be only a cook's knife and chopper! The date, too, is the most modern of all, being A. D. 1677, although the letters are raised, not incised, and carried round the margin as in the others. About this period, also, the village sculptors of these slabs began to reform or modernize their letters; but, not to leap too suddenly into the fashion, they compromised the matter by introducing the cross-bar into the T-crossed A, as that letter is thus formed on Mac Cook's tombstone.